The Myrtle.

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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For the Myrtle.

Old Winter's Farewell.

I HAVE come to say farewell!
But ere my visit ends,
A little talk I'll have
With you, my little friends.

You all can see and feel
That I am not the same
Rough, cold, old fellow that I was
When first to you I came.

And very, very strange,
This seems to you, no doubt;
So now, just hear me tell
How this change was brought about.

This ball on which we live
Again its course has run;
And this, our side of the fair earth
Is turning toward the sun.

Down fall his piercing rays,
So warm, so melting too;
And many a hint he gives
That I must bid adieu.

I cannot, cannot live
Where this mighty Fire King reigns;
When he pours forth his heat, I go
To my broad icy plains.

But I will come again
To tell full many a tale;
For while our earth shall last,
Old Winter will not fail.

My breath you'll keenly feel,
And you'll hear me as I fly;
But now I must be on the March,
Then little ones, good-bye.

WHAT I don't see
Don't trouble me;
And what I see
Might trouble me,
Did I not know
That it must be so. *Goethe.*

For the Myrtle.

Only a Week.

CHAPTER XV.

THE day is breaking and the train is drawing near to the great city.

John could see through the dimness of the morning the far away steeples and the heavy black cloud of smoke that lay over them.

It seemed as if a curtain as heavy lay on his heart. How indefinite and dark the future seemed to him! It was a terrible plunge that he was making into this great city, where he knew not one person, to seek an opportunity to sail away from his native land, and leave behind him all familiar scenes and hearts.

He had never, from the first hour of leaving home, felt the hardihood that Alf had manifested, and now he was sick and worn with the journey and the hard experience he had passed through, he had little courage left for the conflict that he knew was before him.

Alf was wakened by the stir of the travellers, who were waking and rubbing open their eyes to look on the great city that was now so near them.

"What hotel do you stop at?" said a gentlemanly looking man to Alf, just as the train was nearing the station.

"I am not going to a hotel."

"Ah! You have friends in the city then?"

"No sir. I know no one in New York."

"Never here before."

"No sir."

"Then you have a great many new sights to see."

"I suppose there are a great many things of interest here. But I am not here for sight-seeing this time."

"Trying for business, perhaps."

"Yes sir. My friend here and I have set out to try the world a little for ourselves."

"Ah! You have a friend with you?" he said, giving John an encouraging nod. "Well, what branch of business were you and your friend thinking of?"

"We are going to sea, sir."

"Ah, yes. Steamer engaged?"

"No sir. We were not going by steamer."

"Ah! Sailing vessel? What port then are you bound for?"

"We are going to China."

"Oh yes! Well, perhaps I might be of assistance to you in securing your passage. I will get your tickets for you and see you safely into the ship if you will allow me."

"Oh, thank you; you are very kind. But we are not going as passengers."

"Ah, I see. Going to try roughing it a little."

As he said this, he looked at Alf's hands and continued:

"Rather a new experience I conclude it will be for you. Those hands don't look as if they were much used to rough work."

"No sir. I have never had much hardship. But I hope I shall not be a coward about it when it comes."

"That's the spirit to start with. Everything comes easy if you only have pluck enough."

"'Better to swim than sink' is my motto."

"And a very good one. You will make a capital fellow to go out in the world. If I owned a merchantman I should like nothing better than a crew of just such fellows. But this young man," he said, turning to John, "this young man looks rather pale-faced to stand rough weather."

"I am not feeling very well. But I think it is more the fatigue of the journey than anything else. I have usually good health."

"My advice to you would be to lay up for a day or two in the city and recruit before you offer yourself for work."

"Thank you, I would like to, but cannot make it very consistent with our present plans to do so."

"Well, you had at least better stop at some hotel, and rest while your friend and I go and see what can be done about ships."

Just as these words were spoken, the train came into the depot and the inexpressible confusion of New York began.

John drew close to Alf and whispered to him.

"We will not be separated whatever comes or goes."

"I don't know that that is wholly the wisest decision."

"It is my decision, and I shall hold to it as long as I am able."

He had no opportunity to add what was in his mind, that he did not quite like the officiousness of the stranger, and felt that they should be fully as well off if they were without him as with him.

Strange sights greeted their eyes, and strange sounds met their ears on every side. The streets were so confusing that they did not know which way to turn in them, and the people seemed as if they would crush one another so many were hurrying this way and that.

"Now shall we take you first to a hotel where you can lie down and rest, while your friend and I take a look at the ships to see what can be done?" said the stranger to John.

"No I thank you; I think I will try and go wherever you go."

"I am afraid you will make a losing bargain of it if you do; for your face is anything but attractive to a business man's eye."

"I can't help it," said John. "Where Alf goes I go."

"Very well then, come along."

"We ought not to trouble you, sir, to go with us. I think we shall be able to find our way to the wharves."

"Oh, it is no trouble. Not the least in the world. I am somewhat interested in shipping, and can get you a better chance I dare say than you could get by yourselves."

John grew every moment more suspicious of this man. He kept revolving it in his mind how they could escape from him.

On and on they went, threading their way through crowded streets and narrow alleys, until the boys grew dizzy and confused with the hurry and confusion that surrounded them.

John purposely lagged behind, pulling Alf after him and letting their guide get a little way in advance of them.

"Alf, we must get away from this man," he said.

"Get away from him?" said Alf, surprised. "Why he is going to help us get a ship."

"Yes, he will help us, much the way those robbers helped us the other night."

"Hush! He will hear you."

"There is no time for words. But we must get away, I tell you. Watch every opportunity, and the first we see to escape we will cut loose from him."

These words were spoken in an undertone, but they put Alf on his guard and set him thinking about the stranger.

If he had not had one experience in being robbed that week, he would have pooh-poohed at John's fears. As it was, he took some account of the warning and began to look about him.

The man seems all right, he said to himself, but then the robbers seemed all right, until I knew they were robbers. I wonder if he really is a bad man. John may be mistaken. He is sick to-day and I don't think he is inclined to take a very cheerful view of anything. But then if it hadn't been for his watchfulness, I don't know what would have become of me before. I will keep my eyes open. I am on my guard now and I will look out for this man.

Just as he had made this resolution, the stranger stopped before the door of an eating-house, and said:

"Come in and I will stand treat. We must have something to keep our courage up if we are going off on a long cruise among the wharves."

"No, I thank you," says John. "I do not wish anything to drink."

"Well, come in and eat then, and we will talk about the drink afterward."

"I guess we had better have some breakfast," said Alf. "We can t hold out long on the tramp unless we have something to eat."

Just as he said this, there was a cry of "Stop thief! stop thief!" and a boy dashed down the street hotly pursued by the police.

A mob gathered on the instant, and like a great wave swelling and surgiug on, it swept everything with it as it came down the street.

"Now's our time to escape," said John, not thinking for a moment of stopping to gratify his curiosity about what was passing, but only of getting away from the stranger. Seizing Alf by the arm, he rushed down a by-street, and ran as fast as ever his feet would carry him, away and away, and away. He did not turn to see whether they were pursued, but on, and on, and on, he ran, with one thought only, to get away from their would-be helper and friend. After they had run until they were quite out of breath, they stopped and Alf said:

"We have lost *ourselves* from ourselves now. If any body can find us they can do better than we can." *Mrs. E. M. Bruce.*

Don't Grumble.

THIS world has its roses and thorns,
Made up both of pleasure and sorrow,
And often the saddest to-day
Is found the most joyful to-morrow.
So varied the changes we see
While twenty-four hours are gliding,
That wiser that mortal will be,
Prepared for whatever betiding,
Then halt not, though rough be the ground—
They fall who are fearful of stumbling;
And hard as your lot may be found,
Did you ever know good come from grumbling?

The man who doth rise with the lark,
Seeking, like the bee, for the honey,
Finds something turn up before dark,
That brings to the pocket the money.
The soil must be tilled for the grain,
The net must be cast for the fishes,
And only by striving, 'tis plain,
Will fortune fall in with our wishes.
Then halt not, though rough be the ground—
They fall who are fearful of stumbling:
And hard as your lot may be found,
Did you ever know good come by grumbling?

Don't always depend on your friends,
Who fly at the tidings of sorrow,
But rather your purse touch with care,
Seeing that it yields for the morrow;
In fact, be a friend to yourself,
And thus by self-effort succeeding,
You soon unto others can say,
"Thank you, but your aid I'm not needing."
Then halt not, though rough be the ground—
They fall who are fearful of stumbling;
And hard as your lot may be found,
Did you ever know good come by grumbling?

For the Myrtle.

A Puzzle Picture.

JAMIE had a puzzle picture for a birthday present. The friend who gave it to him gave him the key to it, that is a print of the picture just as it was with all the parts put together. He could very easily put it together by looking at the pattern.

But when he showed it to his cousin Alice he did not give her the pattern but let her puzzle it out by herself; and a hard, slow time she had of it.

A PUZZLE PICTURE.

The friend who gave Jamie the picture said to him,

"Life is a puzzle-picture just like that, Jamie. Every day you add a piece on, and I hope you will put it together right and make a good picture of it."

Did he remember, think you, that Jamie had a pattern by which to fashion that picture?

Slow and blundering work would be the putting together of this puzzle-picture of our lives if we had not the perfect model, the beautiful and sinless life of Jesus. *H. A. B.*

For the Myrtle.

The Snow Crust.

"I SAY, Maggie, will you get up before the sun to-morrow morning and take a run with me on the snow crust?"

"Yes, indeed I will, if I can get my sleepy eyes open in season. We haven't taken a run this spring."

"No, and it will be capital running if it freezes hard to-night. Here we've been 'snowed in' and confined to beaten paths all winter. But in the morning we can scamper everywhere, until the sun is high enough to melt the snow again."

Rob and Maggie were out early and found the snow hard and crispy under their feet. What a delightful feeling it gave them to be able to run at will over field, hill and meadow on this same snow that had kept them away so long.

It gave them such a feeling of lightness and airiness that Rob exclaimed,

"I feel as if I could fly."

"Isn't it fun to walk on this high bank and right over the top of the fence?"

"I don't see how people live where there is no snow."

"Nor I; I am glad I live in Maine. Our city cousins don't have this sport," said Maggie. "Let's run to the orchard."

"Oh, here is a robin's nest and I can see straight into it," said Rob. "I'll let it be. How much work it must save the birds to find nests all made. To be sure, they will have to patch it some and put in new lining as mother did to father's old coat, and which was 'just as good as new,' he said, when he put it on."

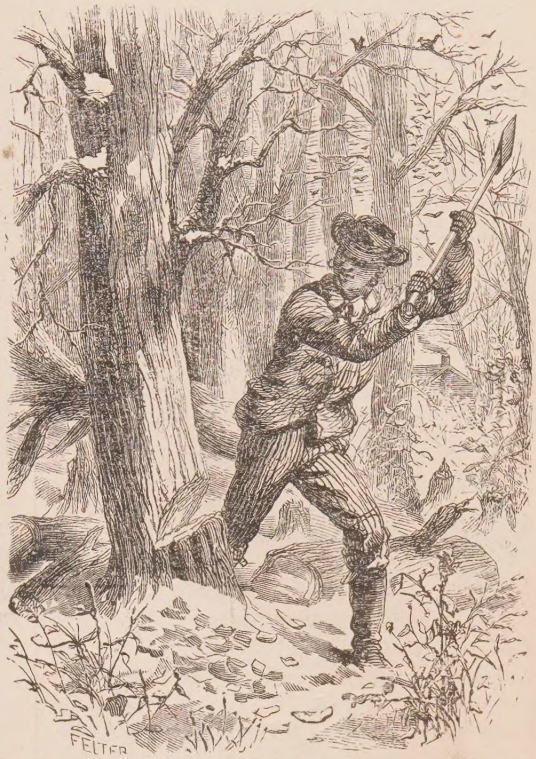
"For my part, I'd rather make a new nest if I were a bird," said Maggie. "I like new things better than old, patched-up last year's things, and besides I like to see them working together so lovingly over their little homes."

"Sentimental, are you? Well, let's go and shake hands with the trees in the grove," said Rob.

Off they scampered, stopping at the garden to examine the tops of the shrubs.

"Now we'll have some spruce gum," said Rob.

"And evergreen too," said Maggie: "and oh, please get me some spruce twigs and cones, for I heard poor lame Nancy say she wanted some. She makes beautiful things of them."



Before they reached the grove they heard blows of an axe, and when they came in sight they saw it was black Tim, who was just cutting his wood for the year, after chopping for his neighbors all winter.

It was a great spruce tree Tim was cutting down, and they watched a little way off and saw it come thundering down. Then they ran up to see if there was any gum on it. Yes, there were great seams full of it all the way up; and Tim chipped it out with his large jackknife, and cut off a whole armful of twigs for them to take home.

"How glad Nancy will be of all this!" said Maggie. "It will last her *forever* I should think."

"Why can't we go and carry them now," said Robbie. "I'll ask mother."

Mother said yes, so off they skipped and knocked at Nancy's door just as she was up.

"We were out running, and thought we would bring you some evergreen and spruce gum," said Robbie.

"And I heard you say you wanted some spruce twigs and cones for frames and baskets," said Maggie.

"Oh, thank you for the gum and evergreen," said Nancy. "The twigs and cones are just what I've been wanting. How kind you were to bring them! 'Tis very little that I can do to bring in a penny, so I depend upon my frames and toys a great deal."

I remember when I could run too," said she, pinching their rosy cheeks, "but that time is over for me. I take much comfort with my crutches and try to be content with God's will. Come again; the sight of your bright eyes and rosy cheeks do my heart good."

Rob and Maggie hurried home for breakfast, feeling hungry but very happy. *C. G. H*

Willie's Heroism.

THE blue sky was covered with dark thunder clouds, and the air was still and hot.

In the little "school-house on the green," a patient teacher was trying to make her scholars bend their anxious eyes on their books; but the little faces would keep turning toward the window.

She had promised to tell the story of William Tell that afternoon to her geography-class; and, finding it so difficult to turn their minds from the shower, she called out that class before its turn, and told them the story about how William Tell had to fire his arrow through an apple which had been placed on the head of his son; and how brave the boy was, and how he cried, "Fire, father! I am not afraid!" for he was sure his father's arrow would never miss its mark.

Just as she was saying this, there came a sudden flash of lightning and a loud crash of thunder. Some of the children screamed, some began to cry, and ran to their teacher for protection; only little Willie Hawthorn kept his seat, and his eyes fixed quietly on his book.

"Why, Willie," asked his teacher, after the shower was over, "why were you not afraid like the other children?"

"Because, Miss McLean, I knew the arrow was in my Father's hand; and how could I be afraid?"

I believe the children never forgot Willie's bravery; and now, when you are afraid of the lightning, little reader, you can remember Willie's answer, and be as brave as he.

Well-Spring.

Jimmie and Jockie.

Jimmie and Jockie are two little boys,
As full of the spirit of mischief and noise
As any you'll find if you look the world over,
And always as busy as bees upon clover.
Those are not their right names, though, between you and me,
But that's what I call them in writing, you see.

They are going to school in the Hazel Dell,
To a nice young lady they love pretty well;
But whether they're better to study than play,
As I am their mamma, I'd rather not say.
And whether they've black eyes, or gray eyes, or blue,
Now guess, and I'll tell you if you guess true.

I'd like to ask your mamma, some day,
How *her* boy goes at his fun and his play;
If *he's* always tearing and soiling his clothes,
And losing the buttons where nobody knows;
If he uses his hat for a bat and a ball,
Till at last in the mud it is certain to fall,
And then comes to his mamma to clean it up right,
And help him out of his pitiful plight.

Does he always go smiling, as all children should,
When she asks him to bring her an armful of wood?
Does he drum, and whistle, and hammer, and shout,
Till peaceable people are quite worn out?
And I'd like to ask her if he and his brother
Ever get angry with one another?

I rather expect your mamma would laugh,
But I'd like to ask if he snowballs the calf,
If he corners the chickens, and chases the sheep,
And pulls the cat's tail as she lies asleep,
If he worries the dog till he hides from his sight,
And keeps up a tumult from morning till night?

But that would be questions enough for one day,
And mind I don't want you to think that I say
That my Jimmie and Jockie behave in this way;
I thought I'd inquire of your mamma, you know,
If she ever had seen one of her boys do so?
Of course she would answer me, "No, oh! no, no!"

Demorests Young America.

Children at Play.

"OPEN your mouth and shut your eyes,"
Three little maidens were saying—
"And see what God sends you!" Little they thought
He listened while they were playing!
So little we guess that a light, light word
At times may be more than praying.

"I," said Kate, with the merry blue eye,
"Would have lots of fun and folly;"
"I," said Ciss, with the bonny brown hair,
"Would have life always smiling and jolly;"
"And I would have just what our Father may send,"
Said loveable little pale Polly.

Life came or the two, with sweetness new
Each morning in gloss and in glister,
But our Father above, in a gush of great love,
Caught up little Polly and kissed her,
And the churchyard nestled another wee grave,
The angels another wee sister.

Gerald Massey.

From Illinois.

A member of the Sunday School in Charlestown, Illinois, sends us the following cheering letter. We are glad to know that the tidings of "Our Sunday Schools" is so welcome; and we are especially glad when the news comes directly from the Sunday School to our columns. It is not only more definite and reliable, but is apt to give many little items of interest that we do not gain from the general papers. It is these *special* things that make the Sunday School column interesting and profitable to other schools. Remember this, friends, and give us the benefit of your experience. But to return to the letter:

Dear Myrtle:—It has given us so much pleasure to read the words of cheer under the head, "Our Sunday Schools," that we really felt it to be our duty to contribute our mite to the MYRTLE, hoping that others might be glad to hear from us, and that we might thus repay them for the good they have done us.

We have a very interesting Sunday School, which meets in our new church every Sunday. It numbers nearly a hundred, old and young, some of our members being sixty-seven years old, and others only three or four. What a grand sight thus to see those who are already "ripe unto the harvest," enquiring, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" for themselves, and encouraging the little children to "Seek him early."

Last New Years' day was our first anniversary and we had a glorious time, with appropriate exercises, songs and refreshments. All were so well pleased that we have resolved to make each returning anniversary of our School still more interesting if possible than its predecessor.

With many wishes for the success of the MYRTLE and our Sunday Schools everywhere, we bid you good-bye. S.

God sees Us.

"Whither shall I go from thy presence?" This is a question which we find in one of the Psalms of the Bible. It means the presence of God. We may hide ourselves from others of our fellow-creatures, but we can never elude the searching gaze of Him whose eye is in every place beholding the evil and the good.

The astronomer Mitchell was once engaged in making some observations on the sun; and just as it was setting, he swept his telescope so that it came into the range of the top of a hill about seven miles away. On that hill he espied a large number of apple-trees, and in one of them were two boys stealing apples, and another was watching to make it certain that nobody saw them, and seeming to feel sure that they were undiscovered. But there sat the astronomer, seven miles away, with the great eye of his telescope fully upon them, seeing every movement they made as plainly as if he had been under the tree with them.

So is it often with us. We may live and act as though we were not seen, but God's great eye is upon us. He can see what the astronomer's instrument cannot, the very thoughts and intents of the heart. We can never go out of his presence. Let us keep this in mind.

Think of It.

Supposing seventy millions of dollars to be spent yearly in this country for alcoholic drinks, and this is a moderate estimate indeed, — think of what this sum would buy of that which would be good and useful. Here is an estimate. It would buy 4,000,000 sheep, 400,000 oxen, 200,000 cows, 40,000 excellent horses, 500,000 suits of men's clothes, 1,000,000 suits of boys' clothes, 500,000 suits of women's clothes, 1,000,000 suits of girls' clothes, 1,200,000 barrels of flour, 800,000 barrels of beef, 3,000,000 bushels of corn, 2,000,000 bushels of potatoes, 10,000,000 pounds of sugar, 400,000 pounds of rice, 2,000,000 gallons of molasses.

Furthermore, it would build 1000 country churches, support 2000 ministers, build 8000 school-houses, furnish 500,000 newspapers, and establish 5000 parish or a less number of town libraries. All this could be done in one year with the price of the alcohol used. What a shame and sin that such a sum should be spent for that which is evil when it might procure such an amount of that which is good. Think of this, young reader, and do what you can to discourage the use of intoxicating drinks.

A Little Girl's Faith.

In a public school in New York, a few years ago, on an alarm of fire, a terrible panic siezed the scholars and teachers, and in their rush from the building many were injured. One of the scholars, a little girl, although very much frightened, still kept her seat. The color forsook her cheek, her lips quivered, the tears came to her eyes, but she moved not. After the excitement was over and the scholars were back in their places again, she was asked how she came to sit so still while all the others were so frightened. "My father," said she, "is a fireman, and he told me if there was an alarm of fire in the school, I must just sit still." We ought to have as much faith in the directions of our Heavenly Father, as this child had in her earthly one.

Weeds.

Every good gardener looks out that his garden is kept clear of weeds. Learn, therefore, this lesson of the gardener. Take care of your mind. Do not let it run to waste, as some careless and indolent people do their gardens or fields. The mind needs cultivating. If good things do not grow out of it, bad ones will; just as a garden will bear weeds and briers if good seeds are not planted in it and these noxious things are not kept out.

A Thought for Teachers.

"Sunday School teachers ought to have no habits which they would not have their pupils imitate." We remember hearing these words once in an address to a Sabbath School. They seemed to us very weighty words. Will our Sabbath School teachers consider them? Teachers, what habits have you that would injure your scholars if they should imitate you in them?

Eternity.

This word occurs but once in the Bible. "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, &c." Isa. lvii. 15. It is nowhere in the Bible applied to punishment of any kind. It is never said that the wicked shall go into, or suffer, or endure, an eternity of punishment.

——A poor boy, who was employed all the week in taking care of cattle, was so anxious to learn the Word of God, that he used to take the Bible into the fields with him; and in the course of a year he committed to memory nearly two thousand verses.

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON LXXXI

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

"Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the ulness of the Gentiles be come in."

SCRIPTURE,—Luke xvi. 19–31.

NOTE. The Saviour foretells the great change which is about to transpire, by which the Gentiles shall come into the kingdom of heaven and the Jews by their obstinacy be left out of the kingdom. The rich man represents the Jewish people, and Lazarus the Genti e world

Question. — What are the circumstances of the rich man?

Answer. — Luke xvi. 19.

Q. — What are the circumstances of Lazarus?

A. — Luke xvi. 20, 21.

NOTE. It might be well said that Lazarus desired the crumbs from the table, for the Gentiles could enter only the outer court of the Temple.

Q. — What happened to the spiritual beggar?

A. — Luke xvi. 22.

NOTE. He died to his old spiritual condition and rose to a better one. He shared in the promises made to Abraham—had the chief place at the spiritual feast, next to the master of the house.

Q. — What happened to the rich man?

A. — Luke xvi. 22.

NOTE. He died to his religious privileges and rose to see the Gentile world enjoying the promises which until then he had supposed that none but Jews could inherit.

Q. — What did the rich man suffer?

A. — Luke xvi. 23.

NOTE. *Hades*, here rendered hell, meant a covered place, the grave.

Q. — Is the father of the Jewish people near him?

A. — Luke xvi. 23.

NOTE. He seems to be in torment because he has persisted in the error that God loves and will love only one people. He now learns that God loves all people and will bless them.

Q. — What does he request of Abraham?

A. — Luke xvi. 24.

NOTE. The lesson taught in this verse is that now the Jews must receive spiritual good from the Gentiles as St. Paul argues in the eleventh chapter of Romans.

Q. — What did he request?

A. — Luke xvi. 28.

NOTE. He wished his brethren to be nformed that the Gentiles inherit the promises. Because Christ and the early Christians taught this the Jews hated and slew them.

Q. — What means did Abraham assure him that the Jews had to know the truth he had learned?

A. — Luke xvi. 29.

Q. — What did the rich man assure Abraham would convince them?

A. — Luke xvi. 30.

Q. — What does he reply to this assertion?

A. — Luke xvi. 31.

NOTE. The Saviour evidently refers to his own resurrection, which will be powerless to convince the Jews that God will fulfil his promise to Abraham that in him all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Hidden Seed

Enigma No. 1.

1. A son of Shem.
2. Struck dead for telling a lie.
3. Gave name to the Hebrew nation.
4. Was raised from the dead by Peter.
5. Was mother of Timothy.
6. Was daughter-in-law of Naomi.

My whole is a recent festival. *Bessie Putnam.*

Enigma No. 2.

1. In most families performed the first of the week.
2. A term used in weighing.

My whole was a great man. *Bessie Putnam.*

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